

Chunking of Tests/Exams - Guide for Faculty / Invigilators

What is the chunking accommodation?

Chunking is when a test/exam is given to a student in 2-3 chunks or sections. The student must take the remaining chunks or sections of the test/exam within the same day (original test date) with up to 1-hour break between sections. During this time, the student will remain in the Test Centre for “on-site” tests, and in the case of distance students, stay in camera view during their break.

Please note: a doctor’s note is required to reschedule the test/exam or for the test/exam to be over 48 hours in case of a “flare-up” (see below for definition).

Flare-up

1. An exacerbation of a chronic disease.
2. a situation in which someone suddenly has problems because of a disease or illness after not having any problems for a long time.

Sometimes referred to as a flare-up, a flare occurs when symptoms of a disease that has been present for a time suddenly worsen. A flare is a transient worsening in severity of a disease or condition that eventually subsides or lessens. For example, in many arthritis conditions the joints can flare with worsening of stiffness, pain, and swelling.

What is the purpose of chunking?

The Chunking Accommodation protects the integrity of the unopened test/exam chunks by:

- Ensuring that the student is not disadvantaged if they have a flare-up of their condition during the test/exam. This accommodation allows the student to take the unopened portions of the test/exam at a later time.
- Preventing the student from having access to a test/exam in its entirety and then returning to the same test/exam at a later time after having the opportunity to review the questions.

What is the chunking process?

- A student who requests to use chunking during their test/exams must first contact their faculty and request to utilize this accommodation at least 5 business days before the scheduled test/exam date.

- If the student is testing in the Accessibility testing center, they must schedule the test/exams no later than five (5) business days in advance and notify the Accessibility Advisor via e-mail of their request for “Chunking” of tests/exams). When the student arrives for their test/exam, they must confirm with the invigilator or faculty whether they will be using their Chunking Accommodation or whether they wish to receive and view their entire test/exam at once.
- If the student chooses to receive and view their entire test/exam at once, they immediately waive their Chunking Accommodation, including the ability to retest within 48 hours if they experience a flare-up of their condition during test/exam.
- If a student waives their Chunking Accommodation and a flare-up of their condition occurs during their test/exam, the student must follow the process for retest/make-ups given by their faculty to all students in their course.
- If the student chooses to use their Chunking Accommodation, the invigilator will hand each section of the chunked test in a closed envelope to the student upon request. Once the student receives the chunked section and opens the envelope, that section or chunk of the test/exam will then be considered for grading. Consistent with the process for all students, the student using a Chunking Accommodation cannot edit sections that have been handed in prior to any breaks.

What should I do if a flare-up occurs?

If a student using a Chunking Accommodation becomes ill or experiences a flare-up of their condition and cannot complete the test/exam, they must immediately inform the invigilator or faculty and turn in the opened sections of their test/exam. The opened sections of the test/exam will be handed to the faculty for grading. Any unopened sections of the test/exam that are turned in to the invigilator will be returned to the faculty for the student to complete at a later scheduled time. The student must obtain a doctor’s note to be able to schedule the completion of the remaining test/exam sections.

What are my responsibilities as faculty?

Once the accommodation request is received (and the student is eligible for Chunking of test/exam accommodation), faculty must break down the test into sections.

The general rule of thumb is to break down the test into equal parts. Here are some general recommendations on how this can be approached:

- If the test/exam is 2 hours, break the test into 2 parts; if the test is 3 hours, break it into 3 parts, etc.
- Try to break sections into chunks where a natural break may occur. For example, if moving from topic to topic or question style to question style grouping (Ex: all multiple choice and true and false, and then all short answer and/or essay style questions).
- Include test chunking recommendations and/or schedules for the invigilators when testing on-site with Accessibility Services.
- Provide students with an e-mail with written directions before the test of the chunking schedule if writing via distance.
- If utilizing a platform such as Pearson, please note that the test/exam must be provided in paper format.
- Please keep in mind that some platforms will not allow chunking and may kick students out of the tests and submit during the break. It is recommended, where possible, to provide this accommodation in the format of written tests on-site or through one of the Contact North Centres' or other post-secondary institutions that offer invigilation services for students attending other post-secondary institutions.

If a student cannot complete the test/exam due to a flare-up, they must obtain a medical note stating such. An alternate date can be arranged between the student/faculty and, if needed, the Accessibility Test Centre contact.